

UNYA



UNYA is the umbrella organization for Swiss student and youth associations dedicated to the United Nations. Founded in 2007, the network gathers nine associations from three linguistic regions in Switzerland. Its member associations are Model United Nations (MUN) teams of the different Swiss Universities. They organise and participate at simulations of UN conferences and engage in various activities such as panel discussions or workshops about UN related issues.

Topic: The Egypt-Ethiopia Nile Crisis

The Nile is the largest river in Africa and provides water to a large part of the population in North-Eastern Africa. Furthermore, it is an important waterway for transport, agriculture and fishing.

In 2011, the Ethiopian government started building the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. This led to conflict with downstream states, particularly Egypt, as they worry that with the dam being built, the water that the Nile carries in their country will be of lower quality and quantity.

While Ethiopia has negotiated with Egypt and Sudan to find a satisfactory solution, this has so far not been successful. The internal conflict between political and ethnic groups in the North of Ethiopia has been escalating in November 2020, also leading to a hardened stance in regards to the dam.

In 2021, while the dam is being filled, the conflict further escalated with Egypt and Sudan conducting joint military exercises close to the border of Ethiopia in May. In July, the Security Council has discussed the situation for the first time and issued a presidential statement urging the parties to resume negotiations.

It is likely that, if the candidacy to the Security Council succeeds, Switzerland will be contributing to the Security Council discussions on this topic.

Project outline

Security Council

15 delegates
representing Security
Council Members

Cabinet: Ethiopia

10 participants
representing members
of the Ethiopian
Government

Cabinet: Egypt

10 participants
representing members
of the Egyptian
Government

Our project aims to introduce university students to the functioning of the UN Security Council in times of crisis and allows them to participate in a hands-on learning experience. By representing different countries and different ministers, they also get to know the foreign policy position of other countries and learn public speaking skills.

A Plus For Peace

As our simulation is set in the near future, it allows us to include a delegate representing Switzerland in the conference. Our project aims to give the participants an insight on how Swiss foreign policy within the Security Council could look like in times of crisis, particularly in terms of the neutrality of the country.

The representation of Switzerland in the simulation also allows us to sensibilise young people for the A Plus For Peace campaign and what role Switzerland plays in peacekeeping, security issues related to climate change and resource access and peace negotiations.